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ABSTRACT

This document is the strategic plan for the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, which consists of two community colleges: Foothill College and De Anza College. The report begins with a summary of the district's past successes and a statement of the desire to evolve according to social demands. Major issues are identified as follows: the need to achieve and maintain currency in curriculum and technology; the desire to adequately support student services; the need for improved communication and respect among staff and faculty; the mandate for a balanced allocation of funds; and the need to repair and renovate buildings. The strategic plan involves prioritizing the above issues according to how well they serve student learning, and calling for district-wide accountability during the process of meeting goals. This report provides specific guidelines in support of these targeted areas. For example, under "Instructional & Curriculum Development," it is suggested that decisions about course and program offerings should be (1) driven by rigorous and consistent review guidelines; (2) linked to K-12, business and community, transfer institutions and district goals; (3) scheduled and offered at various sites; and (4) based on the strengths and weaknesses of the program and facilities. Similar directives are also provided under the headings of Student Services, Human Resources, Governance & Decision Making, Technology Development, Institutional Organization, and Physical Plant. (VF)

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Delivering a First Quality Education for the Twenty First Century

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FOOTHILL-DE ANZA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

DELIVERING A FIRST QUALITY EDUCATION FOR THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY

The Foothill-De Anza Community College District, responding to community needs, exists to provide high quality educational opportunities that promote development of individual abilities and enhance the quality of community life. The Board of Trustees pursues this mission through the programs and services of two comprehensive community colleges supported by a central services organization.

-Mission of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District

CELEBRATING OUR PAST

The Foothill-De Anza Community College District takes pride in forty years of delivering excellence in education to nearly one million students. In 1957 voters chose to create the District by a margin of six to one, and in 1958 a 22 room school became the temporary site of Foothill College. The original faculty and staff numbered thirty-five and the first student enrollment figure was 1,603. At the first Commencement Exercise in June, 1960 there were 38 graduates. In 1995-96, the colleges enrolled 39,260 students, and over 3800 earned degrees or certificates or transferred to four-year institutions.

Forty and thirty years, respectively, have passed since the opening of Foothill and De Anza Colleges. These institutions were opened in the infancy of the space age and the burgeoning technological revolution we are now experiencing.

At the colleges, IBM Selectrics were *the* high tech machines to operate. Teachers duplicated materials on mimeograph machines, and audio-visual aids for classrooms were slides and film strips. A few large classrooms were equipped with large screens and microphones. In 1960 when the double-helix structure of DNA was brand new, biology teachers had only paper models to aid their verbal lectures. Instructors' mailboxes were stuffed because messages were written and hand-delivered. Switchboard operators answered the telephones.

RENEWING FOR OUR FUTURE

While both colleges have won prestigious national recognition and awards for excellence in education, neither is content to rest on its laurels. Both recognize that much has changed in the years since their illustrious beginnings. The District now serves a regional rather than local population, and classroom enrollment at on and off-campus sites has grown to over 40,000 students each quarter. Students are far more diversified in age, ethnicity, and academic preparation. While the demand for transfer continues to exist, student needs for basic skills and ESL training has increased enormously. Costs of living and education have exploded in Silicon Valley.

The way we now work and the demands of the current work force are dramatically different from the 1960's. State and local funding sources for community college

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education have suffered from several economic downturns. The rapidity of changes in science and technology have brought larger numbers of mature people back to college to retool and retrain to maintain or improve their standards of living. And the over-fifty population in Silicon Valley will grow 35%-40% by the year 2000. Working students and older students both have changing educational goals and will require non-traditional delivery systems.

Nevertheless, our campuses, like most private homes and public buildings, remain essentially in their original configuration. Since Foothill was built in 1960, no single building has been added to the campus. At De Anza, only four additions have been made. But these expansions have not relieved the demand. As the economic health of local and state communities improves, we must address the need for renewal in the physical plants, the building of a sound technological infrastructure, the hiring and training of staff to service new technology and support and educate present staff in its use, and creating new programs and curriculum with the instructional materials and services to support them.

Successful, healthy growth in educational institutions requires unified dedication to core values, to a real sense of purpose, and to flexibility and responsiveness to new times and needs. We need to reinvest and recommit to our institutional purpose to remain a premier educational institution. Just as each generation in a successful family provides a high quality, stable, and nurturing soil for future members to grow, Foothill-De Anza has built a reputation for student learning second to none. We continue to offer "opportunity to all" because we intend to uphold that commitment. While a wise family cannot foresee all possible exigencies, it plans for its future responsibly so that its members grow and achieve their goals.

To stay viable, educational institutions must translate dreams into solid strategic plans, develop guidelines and road maps for the future. The challenge of Foothill-De Anza is to combine the unquantifiable personal and intellectual dreams of this local, regional and global community with quantifiable, tangible directions. We must educate a highly diverse student body for life and work in the community. This strategic plan must include institutional change that is responsive to students' academic, vocational, and personal development.

MAJOR STRATEGIC ISSUES FOR FOOTHILL-DE ANZA

Identifying major issues in strategic planning will help us articulate a common destiny in a unified voice. Since both colleges work towards developing ways to help students learn, we need to unify our professional community while protecting the unique qualities of each college. As a community of professionals we recognize that what we do to help students learn will profoundly affect their lives as well as the larger social and political fabric of our civilization. To achieve this end, we must develop a collaboration that tolerates differences and strengthens common goals by addressing issues in five major areas:

- **We must achieve and maintain currency in curriculum and technology:**

  Dramatic changes in student needs and in the region's work force require program and curriculum changes to maintain relevancy in 2000 and beyond. In a 1996 report prepared by the Resource Group, 720 businesses in Silicon Valley indicated that the top skills students need to compete include computer skills and communication skills. Since more than 50% of our students work 35 hours a week or more, we must develop ways and times to deliver education in many different packages.

Currency in technology is necessary not only to deliver educational instruction in ways that benefit students, it is critical in providing student access through distance learning. Further, the intelligent building and use of sound technology will connect the professional staff with each other and the regional and global community. Technology development requires investment in and commitment to hardware, software, maintenance, training, and adequate support. To maintain or claim status as a premier learning institution in the 21st Century, we must begin to invest wisely and heavily in technology now.

- **We will support student services so our diverse population can achieve their educational goals:**

Our commitment to outreach and recruitment must be matched by support services which result in student retention and successful completion of students' goals. Tutorial services, financial aid, academic skill development, and ESL programs have broad cross-curricular impact on our students' success. Demographics suggest that the need for support services will increase. We must make the best use of available funding to maintain our commitment to diversity and student success.

- **We must respect a variety of opinions, achieve conflict-resolution, and initiate positive change:**

Improving communication among ourselves is critical. We must develop skills and positive attitudes toward open, clear communication on individual and policy levels. The absence of such relationships undermines all other attempts to achieve excellence. We must also improve the technology that aids effective and efficient communication within and between the colleges.

As part of communication training and practice, we must develop ways to improve shared governance and decision-making.

We must cherish our human resources by fostering positive attitudes, supporting personnel professionally and economically. Only in this way will we attract and retain high quality staff at all levels.

- **We must create a balanced, workable policy for allocating resources:**

Many areas compete for resources and achieving balance between them is critical. Staff need adequate compensation, classrooms need heat, cooling, microscopes, and maps, libraries need books, the infrastructure needs repair, computers must be bought and serviced. Budget and human resource allocation systems must address and resolve competing needs and ensure that critical areas are not ignored.

- **We must repair, refurbish, and renovate the existing physical plants at both colleges so that our environment is safe and conducive to learning:**

Since Proposition 13 (1978) reduced property taxes, funding has not been adequate for maintenance needs, renovation of old buildings for new uses, or laying the groundwork for a district-wide technology system. We must repair the HVAC systems on both campuses so the environment supports learning in a safe, comfortable atmosphere. To avoid further damage to the physical plant, we must repair roofing and substructures wherever necessary and follow a timely, systematic maintenance plan.

The colleges must prioritize the renovation and furnishing of already available space to best serve student learning. We recognize that we cannot do all of the work, all at once, but must develop plans to achieve these goals as soon as possible.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

To visualize our goals for the future, we must identify where we are going and what we must do to reach our destination. We can assume that it is better to move thoughtfully in critical areas than attempt everything at once. And we should assume that good communication and accountability district-wide are critical in every phase of our movement.

Fundamentally, each of the five questions incorporating our issues point to one or more areas that are signposts along the path of our progress. If we prioritize these issues according to how well they serve student learning *and* simultaneously see that goal tied to the healthy functioning of the human community (generally, all our institutional human resources), we will be able to make decisions and move along to our goal to the extent that funding allows. With student learning as the driving institutional value, we need to prioritize the work we do.

INSTRUCTIONAL & CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

By emphasizing our commonalties while preserving the distinct characteristics of each college we can serve our students well. We should strive for seamless use of either college's curriculum offerings. Both colleges need strong transfer programs, vital vocational curriculum, basic skills, and ESL offerings. Decisions about course and program offerings should be:

- driven by consistent, efficient program review guidelines;
- linked to K-12, business and community, transfer institutions and district goals;
- scheduled and offered at various sites to increase options for working students and others with limited flexibility.
- based on identification of program and facility strengths and weaknesses when making decisions on coordination, consolidation, addition or elimination of programs.

Decisions about curriculum also need to address:

- availability and strengths of accelerated courses, basic skills courses, and ESL courses to serve our varied student body needs;
- academic evaluation of students with different learning styles and cultural backgrounds;
- diversity emphasis both in course materials and hiring to ensure staff with sensitivity to racial and cultural differences;

- faculty and staff development opportunities which encourage currency in teaching methods, materials, and technologies;

- content, methodologies, evaluation and accountability;

- issues of retention and persistence in enrollment from quarter to quarter.

STUDENT SERVICES

To ease students' access to the colleges, we must build systems that help us know more fully who our students are, and develop systems of registration and student information to serve them better. We must be aware of cultural and learning diversity among students, and use personnel and technology to support their learning goals. Student retention, persistence and success in reaching goals is critical. Toward this end, we must:

- implement a new single registration and overall student-intake and counseling system which is efficient and allows cross campus registration;

- implement a new student information system, consistent with the goals stated in this plan;

- develop a plan for student services that focuses on increasing and improving student access and retention. Consider using technology to improve the quality and delivery of student services and develop enrollment and retention management plans;

- explore enrollment issues and develop an outreach and recruitment plan which renews effort in recruiting full-time and multicultural students. Develop enrollment strategies to ensure growth and retention.

To heighten student success, our programs and services must:

- maintain high standards for students and staff, and offer excellent, diversified programs in a culture of innovation and continual improvement;

- attend to individual student goals and honor cultural richness through quality learning resources and support services;

- integrate skills with content courses, and connect programs with high schools, transfer institutions, business, and community;

- develop outcome-based assessment of learning, teaching, and curriculum;

- develop programs and scheduling that are student and learning-centered.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Far beyond addressing staffing strategies, a Human Resources plan needs to address the well being, development, and diversity of all employees. It should be guided by a philosophy of staffing and staff development that values each individual's contributions, welcomes and encourages richness and creativity of a diverse faculty, staff, administration, and board, and responds to employee needs. The following are some goals and objectives reflecting and supporting the areas of emphasis in this Human Resources plan. We need to:

- develop a system of evaluation of staff and staffing patterns coherent with the Technology Plan and Instructional and Student Services plans;
- determine appropriate staffing patterns and goals which incorporate mandated staffing goals and diversity goals of the District;
- recruit and select diverse, well-qualified and creative staff committed to our shared values and vision;
- support efforts to determine methods to prioritize positions and staff requirements.

A vital Human Resources plan also must address itself to the changing atmosphere and working conditions that affect all employees and students in this community. To this end we need to:

- explore alternative staffing plans that include non-traditional work schedules, telecommuting, etc.;
- explore employees attitudes toward their work in the light of technological changes; find ways to enrich rather than enlarge jobs;
- build appropriate staff development, training, and recognition for employees while supporting changing demographics of our employee population;
- develop campus climates that welcome cultural and ethnic diversity;
- work to develop a technology plan for Human Resources with more independent control by employees over their data-employee information systems.

GOVERNANCE & DECISION MAKING

The Foothill-De Anza Community College District has already embraced the *concept* of shared governance and decision making as a principle of operation. Nevertheless, the practices are far more difficult to implement than the ideas. We must improve our *skills* in handling conflict and *practicing* the habits of shared governance and decision making throughout the district. We need development in these skill areas to move forward as a first rate institution:

- open, clear communication;

- ability and willingness to trust each other;
- timely, non-defensive input and feedback to ideas and proposals for change or improvement;
- ability and willingness to address issues not persons;
- ability to resolve conflicts, make decisions, and take action.

TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

Both colleges and the district need a well planned, developed, maintained, and supported technology system. To achieve the currency we need and plan for future growth we must:

- build a Technology Master Plan coherent with each college and Central Services, clearly linked to the District's student-centered learning mission, and designed to strengthen communication for all District students and staff;
- develop a coherent priority system for decision making and purchasing of equipment to ensure wise, timely progress;
- create a Technology Task Force focused on creating quality educational guidelines for the use of technology; explore rationale and write policy for standards of use, evaluation, and accountability for employing technology on the campuses and in distance learning;
- commit to adequate technological staff for in-service training, support, and maintenance of hardware, software and human spirits;
- achieve unification among colleges and central services about costly decisions such as a single registration system, outreach and retention system, technology tracking system of accountability, etc.

INSTITUTIONAL ORGANIZATION

We need management development to continue to upgrade skills and develop consistency and accountability in our applications in central services and on both campuses. Such unification will foster a more open and cooperative environment. To achieve these goals, we need to:

- review, redefine, and improve the role of Central Services in supporting the colleges; develop a philosophy regarding Central Services and individual college responsibilities and accountabilities; identify and eliminate duplication of services and unnecessary services;
- develop coherent management plans to enhance performance and accountability throughout the district;

- develop and implement a Technology Master Plan for Administrative Services, Instruction and Student Services which is clearly linked to the Infrastructure Master Plan and to the Educational/Instructional Master Plan;

- tie resource allocation and actual expenditures to mission-based planning efforts.

PHYSICAL PLANT

The district needs to maintain the current infrastructure while developing one suitable for current and future demands by:

- assessing physical assets district-wide;

- eliminating duplication without compromising value;

- developing a budget and resource allocation model that addresses infrastructure planning (for repair, maintenance, renovation, and new construction) in a fair, open, consistent manner;

- developing a core of highly trained technicians to operate the plant;

- strengthening campus maintenance teams and operations management teams;

- providing a reliable, cost efficient HVAC system that maintains a healthy, comfortable working environment for all;

- obtaining maximum benefit from the State's Capital Outlay Program;

- developing individual facilities plans within each campus that are coherent with the district-wide plan;

- requiring a system of accountability within and between campuses and the district.

THE FUTURE

(To be written...)